

REMARKS

The Examiner objected to claims 1, 12 and 23.

The Examiner rejected claims 10 and 21 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph.

The Examiner rejected claims 1-3, 7, 8, 12-14, 18, 19 and 23 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over US Pat No 6,625,648 to Schwaller et al. in view of US Pat No 6,240,414 to Beizer et al.

The Examiner rejected claims 4, 6, 15 and 17 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Schwaller and Beizer and further in view of US Pat No 6,718,330 to Zenner.

The Examiner rejected claims 5 and 16 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over the combination of Schwaller and Beizer and further in view of US Pat No 6,314,089 to Szlam et al.

The Examiner rejected claims 9 and 20 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over the combination of Schwaller and Beizer and further in view of US Pat No 5,548,506 to Srinivasan.

The Examiner rejected claims 10 and 21 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over the combination of Schwaller and Beizer and further in view of US Pat No 5,548,506 to Srinivasan.

The Examiner rejected claims 11 and 22 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over the combination of Schwaller and Beizer and further in view of US Pat No 4,677,588 to Benjamin et al.

Applicants respectfully traverse the objections, §112 and §103 rejections as follows.

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Claim Objections

The Examiner objected to claims 1, 12 and 23, allegedly "because of the following informality: Claims 1, 12 and 23 recite "a dynamically changing list of control documents." Reference to Figure 1, shows that applicant is actually claiming a dynamically changing list of updates to database records".

In response, Applicants note that the amendment to claims 1, 12 and 23 has deleted the recitation of "a dynamically changing list of control documents." Accordingly, Applicants respectfully contend that the objection to claims 1, 12 and 23 is moot.

35 U.S.C. §112, Second Paragraph

The Examiner rejected claims 10 and 21 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph.

The Examiner argues: "Claims 10 and 21 contain the trademark/trade name Lotus-script, Lotus-Domino software and Lotus Notes databases.' Where a trademark or trade name is used in a claim as a limitation to identify or describe a particular material or product, the claim does not comply with the requirements of 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph."

In response, Applicants note that claims 10 and 21 have been amended such that any alleged reference to Lotus-script, Lotus-Domino, and Lotus Notes does not appear in the amended claims 10 and 21. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully contend that the rejection of claims 10 and 21 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph is moot.

35 U.S.C. §103Rejections

The Examiner rejected claims 1-3, 7, 8, 12-14, 18, 19 and 23 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over US Pat No 6,625,648 to Schwaller et al. in view of US Pat No 6,240,414 to Beizer et al.

The Examiner rejected claims 4, 6, 15 and 17 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Schwaller and Beizer and further in view of US Pat No 6,718,330 to Zenner.

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The preceding cited prior art references used to reject claims 1-23 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) will be referred to as the "cited prior art references".

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Argument

Independent claims 1, 12, and 23 comprise features which none of the cited prior art references teach or suggest. The following discussion describes exemplary features of claims 1, 12, and 23 which none of the cited prior art references teach or suggest.

Applicants note that claim 1 recites a method for updating a database structure, claim 12 recites a computer system containing software that when executed implements said method for updating said database structure, and claim 23 recites a computer program product comprising software adapted to implement said method for updating said database structure. Accordingly, Applicants will next provide several examples of why the cited prior art references do not teach or suggest said method for updating said database structure.

A first example why the cited prior art references do not teach or suggest said method for updating said database structure is that none of cited prior art references do not teach or suggest the following first feature of claims 1, 12, and 23: "generating a view of the database structure, said view of the database structure including data of the database structure being a table that is not a table of the database structure, said view identifying a plurality of control documents, each control document of the plurality of control documents comprising a list of tasks to be performed by at least one agent assigned to said each control document, said view being organized into columns that include a Type column and a Status column, said entries in the Type column each identifying a unique control document of the plurality of control documents ... [and] ... each entry in the Status column for said associated control document identified in the Type column having a status selected from the group consisting of the Approved status, a Disapproved status, a Draft status, and a Processed status".

Thus, said first feature of claims 1, 12, and 23 recites a table structure not disclosed in the cited prior art references, namely the table having the Type and Status columns subject to the limitations of: "entries in the Type column each identifying a unique control document of the plurality of control documents ... [and] ... each entry in the Status column for said associated control document identified in the Type column having a status selected from the group consisting of the Approved status, a Disapproved status, a Draft status, and a Processed status".

Moreover, the table of claims 1, 12, and 23 represents a "view" such that "said view of the database structure being a table that is not a table of the database structure" (emphasis added). In other words, the table of claims 1, 12, and 23 is not a table of the database structure, which is not disclosed in the cited prior art references. In fact, the ordered list of tasks in Schwaller, col. 11, lines 10-30 is not even disclosed by Schwaller as being comprised by a table. Schwaller is totally silent as to the structural organization of the ordered list of tasks.

Applicants cite the specification, page 3, lines 7-10 for the definition of the claimed view: "A "view into a database structure is known in the art as a "virtual table" in which data of the database structure is represented in the form of a table, but does not actually exist as a table of the database structure."

A second example why the cited prior art references do not teach or suggest said method for updating said database structure is that none of cited prior art references do not teach or suggest the following second feature of claims 1, 12, and 23: "executing the tasks on the list of tasks comprised by a first control document of the plurality of control documents in the Type Column having an Approved status, said executing being performed by the at least one agent

assigned to the first control document, said executing including updating the database structure”.

Applicants note that the tasks on the first control document executed by the at least one agent must be listed in the Type column of the table as having an Approved status. In contrast, Schwallier discloses on col. 11, lines 10-30 only that an ordered list of tasks are to be performed, but does not disclose that said ordered list of tasks are in a listed in a Type column of a table as having an Approved status.

A third example why the cited prior art references do not teach or suggest said method for updating said database structure is that none of cited prior art references do not teach or suggest the following second feature of claims 1, 12, and 23:

“each entry in the Status column for said associated control document identified in the Type column having a status selected from the group consisting of the Approved status, a Disapproved status, a Draft status, and a Processed status,

said Approved status for said associated control document identified in the Type column denoting that said associated control document has been approved for having its tasks carried out,

said Disapproved status for said associated control document identified in the Type column denoting that said associated control document cannot have its tasks carried out,

said Draft status for said associated control document identified in the Type column denoting that said associated control document has been created but has not yet been approved for having its tasks carried out,

said Processed status for said associated control document identified in the Type column denoting that said associated control document has had its tasks carried out”.

Applicants note that none of the cited prior art references teach or suggest that an entry in the Type column must have one of the statuses of: Approved, Disapproved, Draft, and Processed, subject to the recited definitions of Approved, Disapproved, Draft, and Processed.

Applicants respectfully point out that the preceding features of the claimed table of claims 1, 12, and 23 are disclosed FIG. 1 and described in the specification page 4, line 3 - page 5, line 1.

Based on the preceding arguments, Applicants respectfully maintain that independent claims 1, 12, and 23 are not unpatentable over the cited prior art references and are in condition for allowance. Since claims 2, 3, 7 and 8 depend from claim 1, Applicants contend that claims 2, 3, 7 and 8 are likewise in condition for allowance. Since claims 13, 14, 18 and 19 depend from claim 12, Applicants contend that claims 13, 14, 18 and 19 are likewise in condition for allowance.

In addition, new claims 26, 28, and 30 claim the following feature illustrated in FIG. 1 and not disclosed in the cited prior art: "wherein said entries in Status column comprise a first entry having the Approved status, a second entry having the Disapproved status, a third entry having the Draft status, and a fourth entry having the Processed status". In other words, claims 26, 28, and 30 are reciting the novel and non-obvious feature of the four statuses (Approved, Disapproved, Draft, Processed) each appearing in the Status column of the claimed table.

In addition, new claims 27, 29, and 31 claim the following feature illustrated in FIG. 1 and not disclosed in the cited prior art:

“said columns further comprising a Submitter column and a Submitted On column,
said entries in the Submitter column each being associated with a corresponding entry in the Type column,
said entries in the Submitted On column each being associated with a corresponding entry in the Type column,
said Submitter column identifying a person who initially submitted said associated control document in the Type column in said Draft status,
said Submitted On column identifying a date and time at which said associated control document in the Type column was initially submitted in said Draft status.”

In other words, claims 27, 29, and 31 are reciting the novel and non-obvious feature of the Submitter and Submitted On columns in the claimed table.

CONCLUSION

Based on the preceding arguments, Applicants respectfully believe that all pending claims and the entire application meet the acceptance criteria for allowance and therefore request favorable action. If the Examiner believes that anything further would be helpful to place the application in better condition for allowance, Applicants invites the Examiner to contact Applicants' representative at the telephone number listed below. The Director is hereby authorized to charge and/or credit Deposit Account 09-0457.

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